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METHODS OF SOCIAL REFORM. By Thomas Mackay. London : John Murray, 1896. Pp. 363.

CLASSES AND MASSES. By W. H. Mallock. London : Adam & Charles Black, 1896. Pp. x., 139.

Mr. Mackay's essays are mainly critical, and are specially directed against politicians who have countenanced the extension of the facilities offered by the Poor Law (whether in the direction of outdoor relief or state pensions) to the economic dependence of the poor. The argument is familiar, but it has not often been stated with such completeness or abundance of illustration. Mr. Mackay, however, is more conclusive when he insists that "independence is a nobler ideal than dependence" than when he implies that the solution of the social question consists in throwing the poor upon their own "capacity for independence." As he himself admits, "poverty" is not a definite economic condition, but may simply signify a want of equilibrium between a man's habits and his conditions. What the poor want is not extensive relief, but better wages and better conditions of life. And it is on the more positive or constructive side of social reform that Mr. Mackay's policy is unsatisfying. It seems to reduce itself to "freedom of exchange," and to rest upon "an elementary truth in economics,—viz., that voluntary exchange brings a profit to both parties." But the transaction between an underpaid shirt-maker and a Hebrew pawnbroker is not, for all that, one that we can regard with complaisance. And yet it has all the elements of what Mr. Mackay calls a "bargain." For he considers that the "collective bargain" (of trade-unions) is a contradiction in terms,—apparently because it does not turn upon the "higgling" of the market,—and that the exchange of services, although "not precisely the same thing" as the exchange of commodities, is "necessarily subject to the ordinary laws of the market." Mr. Mackay may have some ground for condemning the trade-unionist "policy of restriction," but when he says that "the only danger which threatens the future of the workman" is "his excessive and superstitious faith in politics and trade-unionism,—occupations no more conducive to profit and content than the labors of Sisyphus,"—we are only the more convinced that Mr. Mackay has a profounder experience of poor law administration than he has of industrial facts or industrial history. We need only compare the amount of pauperism his poor-law reform might diminish with the amount that labor legislation and trade-

unionism have prevented, in order to realize the limitations to Mr. Mackay's programme of social reform, admirable as it is from the point of view of poor-law policy. And Mr. Mackay is surely using words either loosely or confusedly when he speaks of "the collectivist principle which lies at the root of our English poor-law systems."

One of Mr. Mackay's most instructive essays deals with "The Abuse of Statistics," and it has constantly occurred to our mind in reading Mr. Mallock's hand-book for popular speakers,—on the conservative side. Mr. Mallock's brief consists largely in skilfully-selected figures and often ingeniously-constructed diagrams, which are intended to "enable any one without any previous training" to assert "with confidence on a public platform" that, in spite of "the arguments and demands of agitators and excitable reformers," this is the best of all possible economic worlds, and more particularly that "the tendency of the present system, as shown in nine-tenths of the population, is to make the poor richer, the rich slightly poorer, and to augment the middle classes." Mr. Mallock, however, although he tells us that "the lot which is commonly called the lot of the poor is not, as such, a fit subject of any commiseration," being "the normal type of human life," grants that there is a "residuum," even in England, of some three millions,— "a large portion of which may be called miserable, and all of them may be called unfortunate." But they need not mar the symmetry of the argument, as we may "put them aside" as "not in any sense a sign or product of anything special in our modern industrial system;" as not being "absorbed" by it, they cannot form part of it.

Nor does Mr. Mallock allow himself to be disturbed by the fact that, even on his own graphic showing, considerably more than one-fourth of the working-class have only forty-three pounds a year or less on which to support themselves and their families; for this is a "state of things tending to disappear." Mr. Mallock succeeds in convincing us that statistics may be very abundant, but may miss the point after all; if he also shows us that it may be as useful for "Radicals and Socialists," as for "Conservatives and Individualists," to realize the fallacy of statistical generalization. The many economic questions that Mr. Mallock raises rather than answers are more appropriately discussed in an economic review; but if "facts," as explained by Mr. Mallock, make the theory of a minimum standard of living a snare and a delusion, so much the

worse for "the facts," with which we agree with Mr. Mallock, "it is most important that the political speaker should familiarize himself."

But Mr. Mallock holds not only that whatever is is right, but that our social system is something fixed and unalterable; and this is the—not very modern—assumption underlying the whole of his argument.

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LECTURES ON JUSTICE, POLICE, REVENUE, AND ARMS, delivered in the University of Glasgow. By Adam Smith. Reported by a Student in 1763. Edited by Edwin Cannan. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896.

These are a set of student's notes transcribed, in 1766, from an original of 1763. Their genuineness is well attested, and the internal evidence is all in their favor. The sentences have so characteristic a ring of the great author that we cannot fail to believe in the faithfulness of the original record. Indeed, our only wonder is that Mr. Cannan does not suppose the notes to have been first taken in shorthand. Shorthand was practised then as now. In the *Annual Register* for 1760 (page 68), a doctor in Reading "sent for his son, who wrote shorthand, to take down the words of a boy in a trance."

The programme of the course covered by these notes bears out the well-known description given by Millar in Dugald Stewart's "Life of Adam Smith." We may suppose it not impossible that the original notes were Millar's own. In any case the correspondence is exact. According to Millar, Adam Smith divided his course in Moral Philosophy into four parts, which we may sum up as (*a*) natural theology, (*b*) ethics, (*c*) justice (with natural jurisprudence), and (*d*) expediency (with political economy, and economic policy). The lectures on the first are lost. The "Moral Sentiments," 1759, embraced the second, and the "Wealth of Nations," 1776, presented Adam Smith's revised version of the fourth. The present notes give us the third, together with the first version of the fourth; and we are able in some degree to see how the philosopher passed from the one part to the other, and how systematic was his conception of what we should now call Social Philosophy. We see, too, how closely Montesquieu's example had been followed; a great portion of Part III. is the history of institutions.